

## Volunteers Honored With Awards

Over 80 volunteers attended The Sight Center's 16th Annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony held in October.

The John Goerlich Distinguished Service Award was presented to Dr. Douglas V. Austin for his years of dedication to the Sight Center. The Goerlich Award is given annually to the candidate who provided a service for, or opportunity to improve the well-being of individuals who are blind, or made a significant contribution to the cause

of sight preservation, or perform volunteer services on behalf of the blind community.

The Iris Awards are presented to dedicated volunteers of The Sight Center who exemplify dedication to the agency and promote the services of The Sight Center. Ms. Laura Draheim and Dr. William Becker were honored with the 1995 Iris Awards.

Other volunteers were presented with heart-shaped pins for five-year, ten-year and fifteen-year service to The Sight Center.

## Volunteers Sing a Wonderful Song



The Sight Center, Toledo Society for the Blind has been serving the community since 1923

**The Sight Center**  
"serving people who are blind or visually impaired"  
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"Sightings" is available in braille, large print and taped text

The Mission of the Sight Center is "to maximize the independence of individuals who are blind or visually impaired and to minimize the incidence of blindness through education and prevention."

The Sight Center offers the following services:

- Low Vision Clinic
- Talking Books
- Visual Aids and Appliances
- Orientation & Mobility Training
- Home Visits
- SCAN
- Braille Express
- Vision Screenings
- Support Groups
- Talks & Tours
- Education
- Low Income Clinic
- Adaptive Technology
- Independent Living Skills
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Endowment Opportunities

For further information, on any of these programs, contact The Sight Center at (419) 241-1183.

# SIGHTINGS

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a publication of The Sight Center

Summer 1996

## Sights 'N Sounds of Summer Gala Benefit Slated For August

Plans are underway for the 2nd annual benefit gala, *Sights 'N Sounds of Summer... "A Sporting Affair"* slated for Saturday, August 17, 1996 at the Inverness Club. "The evening promises to be very exciting," said Jean Smith, co-chair of the event with Ann Forman. "There will be music with the Toledo Symphony Jazz Ensemble, food, games, a silent auction plus a few surprises."

After a nationwide search, the Board of Trustees at the Sight Center have hired Gordon J. Kohler as the new executive director. Mr. Kohler has over 24 years experience in the non-profit world, most recently with Americorps and Sylvania Community Services.

"I look forward to the challenges at the Sight Center. I anticipate expansion and growth in our services and programs as we go forward into the 21st century," Mr. Kohler said.

A native of Toledo, Mr. Kohler lives in Sylvania with his wife, Karen and two daughters.



Gordon J. Kohler



and training in the proper use of the equipment.

A client is prescribed optical aids, according to individual goals. For example, a visually impaired student may benefit from corrective devices allowing him the freedom to see the blackboard in the classroom, watch a television program at home, read street signs, read a book or read a menu in a restaurant. The visual aids enable an individual to gain greater independence.

For further information contact The Sight Center at (419) 241-1183.

**THE SIGHT CENTER**

Toledo Society for the Blind  
Mission: "to provide services that maximize the independence of individuals who are blind or visually impaired and to minimize the incidence of blindness through education and Board of Trustees

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**Thank You**

The Sight Center would like to thank all of our volunteers, contributors and foundations for their continuous and valuable support. The agency would like to list all of these names in this newsletter, however, because of the number of individuals it is not possible. It is our policy that it is more important, in the limited space we have available, to provide information on services and programs. Again, thank you, without your support, countless individuals would be lacking in independence and quality of life that the agency's staff work to provide.

Executive Director - Gordon Kahler  
Editor - Laurie Cohen

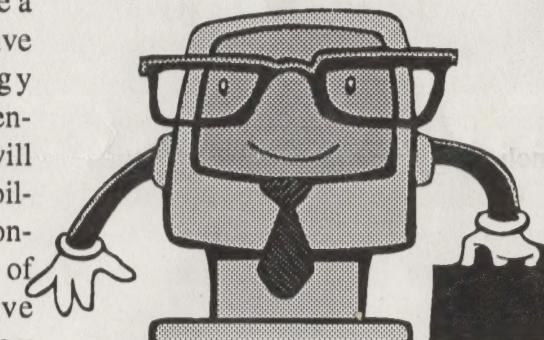
**Adaptive Technology Resource Center**
**Adaptive Technology Debuts At The Sight Center**

"Beam me up Scottie," well no not quite, but we have a new department at the Sight Center that puts us one step closer to the Star Trek Generation.

Through a year and a half effort by several dedicated individuals and the generosity of some major contributors we now have a new Adaptive Technology Resource Center. This will give us the ability to demonstrate most of the adaptive technology which is computer-based.

Talking computers, scanned documents, refreshable Braille displays, screen magnification and surfing the Internet are some of the buzz words echoing about in the halls. What these mean, and most importantly, how they can enhance our lives, is now a reality.

We can work one-on-one with visually challenged individuals to determine what is needed to allow them to get into the competitive job market or get



back doing the things that they used to do like writing letters, reading printed materials, keeping track of various forms of information, etc. We can also work with employers to show them how easily they can make available the systems that will allow a visually challenged employee to be very productive.

This is only the first step. It is our goal to build the department into a full features educational, training and evaluation center. There is a big need for these services in Northwestern Ohio and Southeastern Michigan. We are dedicated to filling these needs.

If you are interested in a demonstration or would like to discuss how you or your organization can help with the growth of this effort, please give us a call. We pride ourselves on being user friendly.

Photo by: Gordon Kahler

**SCAN****Sight Center Audio Network**
**SCAN Adds Listeners, Continues Expansion**

Patients at the Medical College of Ohio and Riverside Hospitals are now able to receive Northwest Ohio's radio reading service, the Sight Center Audio Network (SCAN). The service is broadcast over channel 35 on the hospitals in-room closed circuit television systems. "This allows people to keep in touch with local news from their community even while they're hospitalized," according to Gary Hoffman, Director of Broadcasting.

Trained volunteers read local newspapers from eight cities each day, including Lima, Fremont, Port Clinton, Bowling Green, Monroe, Defiance, and Findlay. The flagship publication of the broadcast is *The Blade* which is read twice daily. Magazines such as *Smithsonian*, *Newsweek* and *People* are included in the 14 hour broadcast schedule which runs from 9:00 am to 10:00 pm -- 365 days a year.

Because telecommunications technology is changing, SCAN plans to add an additional layer of service to its existing broadcast. Currently being installed is a fiber optic network which, when completed, will allow a print handicapped person access to the newspaper simply by making a local telephone call. The individual can then jump through stories and headlines as



SCAN, the Sight Center's radio reading service broadcasts 14 hours each day, seven days a week.

they wish.

"This 'on demand' service is an exciting opportunity for people to choose articles they want to read when they want to read them," said Mr. Hoffman. "The new service will serve the needs of a mobile society-- people who may not have the opportunity to listen to an entire newspaper broadcast."

The system is being funded by the Ohio Educational Telecommunications Network Com-

mission. Hoffman adds that the voice-activated system will meet the needs of persons with various disabilities and is on the cutting edge of current technology.

Internet delivery of print materials and other information is also being explored. SCAN currently serves more than 5,000 individuals in N.W. Ohio and southeast lower Michigan. Weekend broadcasts of SCAN are made possible by the Toledo Community Foundation.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteers are needed at The Sight Center in the following areas:

- Prevention of Blindness
- Deliver SCAN receivers
- Sights N' Sounds of Summer Gala Benefit
- SCAN readers
- Friendly Visitors
- Transportation Drivers

Call Linda Wininger at (419) 241-1183

## Braille Express

**Braille Express Spins  
Onto World Web**

We constantly hear of the almost unlimited uses for information and services on the Internet and the World Wide Web. Now, Braille Express is using the Web to help speed braille production.

Braille Express is one of the only braille producers in the country using the Internet to send files back and forth among transcribers, proofreaders, and the agencies that ultimately purchase them.

"We used to think of services like Federal Express as fast", said Kim Whitney, Director of Braille Express, "but now I send a file over the Internet and have it in the recipient's hands in less than 60 seconds. The technology is truly amazing."

Beyond the speed advantage, the Web is very accessible to people who are visually impaired. This is creating more entrepreneurial job opportunities for persons who are visually impaired in many industries including braille transcription and production.

Braille Express is a fully computerized production facility, using equipment such as scanners, braille translation programs, and high speed embossers to produce quality braille in a fraction of the time it once took.

## Prevention of Blindness

**Vision Screenings Minimize Vision Loss**

Did you know that the Sight Center's Prevention of Blindness Department received a SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD from the National Eye Health Education Program for "contributions to ensuring that the results of eye and vision research are used for the benefit of all Americans."

The NEHEP, coordinated by the National Eye Institute, one of

**Free Children's Vision Screenings Scheduled**

*The Prevention of Blindness Department will be giving free vision screenings as part of the Children's Right to Sight program. During the summer months, vision screeners will be at the following locations:*

**Toledo Zoo**

Monday, June 3 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Monday, June 10 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Monday, June 17 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Monday, June 24 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Monday, August 5 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Monday, August 12 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Monday, August 19 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Monday, August 26 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
(The Toledo Zoo has free admission on Mondays).

**Toledo Mud Hens Games**

Wednesday, June 26 - 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm  
Tuesday, August 20 - 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm  
Wednesday, August 28 - 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

**Lucas County Fair**

Tuesday thru Sunday, July 23 thru July 28, varied times

**Children's Health Fair at Southwyck Mall**

Sunday, August 4 - 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm

## Department of Development

**New Development Director Named**

Linda Wininger, former Director of Volunteers, has been appointed as the new Director of Development in the Department of Development at The Sight Center.

Ms. Wininger looks forward to enhancing the development issues within the Sight Center. "There are so many avenues we have yet to explore. Raising funds is such an essential part of our agency," she said.

"The Department of Development will look into ways to illuminate this course."

"I anticipate that the endowment base at the Sight Center will grow and expand as well as opportunities for planned giving."

John Fogel is the Planned Giving Consultant at the agency and is working jointly with Ms. Wininger.

In her new role, Ms. Wininger will be responsible for endowments, planned giving, direct mail, fund-raising, grants, special events and volunteers.

Ms. Wininger will continue to recruit volunteers. "The agency could not provide its services without our valued volunteers," she said.

**Agency Begins Endowment Efforts**

With the recent organizational changes of the Department of Development and the availability of John Fogel as part-time Planned Giving Consultant, the agency is now positioned to begin concentrated efforts to build the much-needed Endowment funds.

Endowment is a permanent pool of invested funds from which only the annual income is expended for general operating

needs or specific application to certain services as may be chosen by the donors.

Generally speaking, Endowment comes from individual donors through Will bequests, trust remainder designations, gifts of life insurance and several "life income agreements" whereby funds are transferred to the agency during your lifetime but the donor "retains" a legal and contractual right to the earnings income generated by that specific fund.

The agency can offer our friends

information and answer questions to interested parties during the education/investigative period and help potential donors by co-ordinating any subsequent implementation through and with the donors attorney and other financial advisors.

*... We are excited about the potential to help our friends help themselves while helping the Sight Center as well....*

stream to a needy family member can simultaneously help strengthen the Sight Center in meeting its ever increasing demand on its services.

We are excited about the potential to help our friends "help themselves while helping the Sight Center as well."

To learn more about endowment opportunities, contact John Fogel, Planned Giving Consultant or Linda Wininger, Director of Development at The Sight Center at (419) 241-1183.

## Board Member Message

## A Letter From Someone Who Wears Four Hats

By Ruth C. Lindecker, Ph.D., Professor Emerita  
Department of Special Education Services, The University of Toledo

Have you read the Mission Statement of the Sight Center? It's short and to the point. The first half states that the agency is dedicated to maximizing the independence of blind and visually impaired persons. Let's consider IT.

It takes a lot of "drive" to get past one's own barriers, not to mention the obstacles put up by well-meaning and often unthinking "normal" persons. ATTITUDES about disabilities play the major role in success or lack of it -- on both sides of any situation. Some of you in contact with individuals having disabilities may observe a heightened sense of self-confidence and purpose. You've noticed it because STEREOTYPING is OUT. REALITY IS IN.

What am I leading up to? Actually, food for thought and discussion. Our readership is so diverse that I run the chance that you will misunderstand this piece. Feel free to respond.

The Sight Center and its clients have been the beneficiaries of untold kindnesses. Some which seemed appropriate in a time past are no longer so. The charitable organizations donating goods and services may want

to re-think modes of helping. Here are three examples:

- The practice of issuing a grocery gift certificate at holiday time: wouldn't it convey a greater respect for Sight Center clients to issue a gift certificate for a local department store? In this way, selections could be more personal. And the implication of a "welfare donation" would be absent.

- Clothing donations: Most of you may have worn hand-me-downs as children... and hated every stitch of it. I wonder whether these friends might consider another way of showing THEIR CARING. So it may be wise to investigate first.

- Finally, free tickets: Although as many as 100 tickets for a recreational event are donated to Sight Center clients, transportation costs and staff assistance now are coming from our budget. DOES THIS CONTRIBUTE TO INDEPENDENCE AND THE DIGNITY THAT COMES FROM IT?

Does it put limited funds to their best use?

Far from having all the answers, I simply aim to get thinking started. Those hapless, helpless, hopeless "blind people" are

fewer and fewer these days. Besides, every "TYPICAL" person lives in an interdependent world. And would it be a shocker to realize that every human has at least one disability -- recognizable or not? Please continue to lend a helping hand to whomever needs it, but as you do, remind yourself that people with disabilities are MORE LIKE YOU THAN DIFFERENT FROM YOU!

Now, does that phrase "to maximize independence" send your thoughts in new directions? One avenue might be the provision of transportation -- always a problem which lack can cancel out Equal Access.

To render myself credible, I'll explain my four hats:

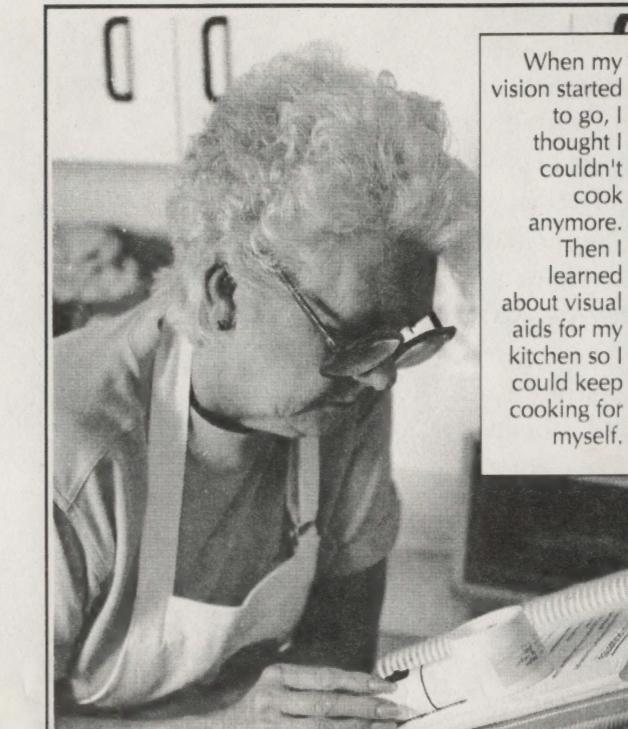
- The newest -- as a member of the Board of Trustees -- is a bit more than four years old.

- A more seasoned one is that of a volunteer on several fronts.

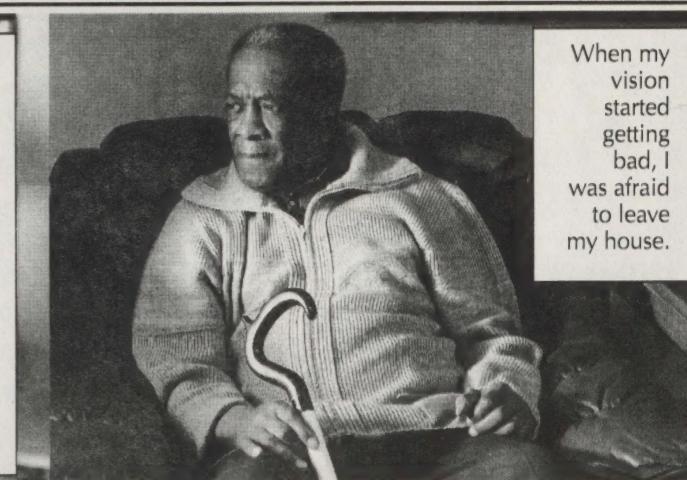
- An even older hat is labelled "professional in the field of visual impairment and blindness".

- The very first hat was given to me the day I walked into the Sight Center as a client!

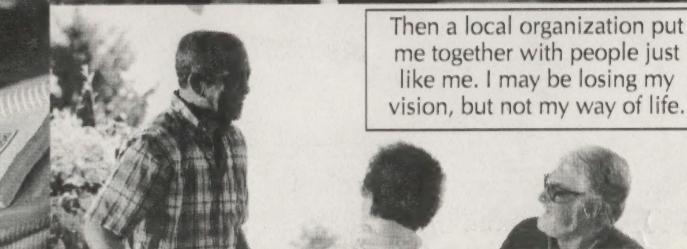
## Social Services Department



When my vision started to go, I thought I couldn't cook anymore. Then I learned about visual aids for my kitchen so I could keep cooking for myself.



When my vision started getting bad, I was afraid to leave my house.



Then a local organization put me together with people just like me. I may be losing my vision, but not my way of life.

We help those who don't see well, live like those who do.

THE SIGHT CENTER

(419) 241-1183 1-800-624-8378 FAX: (419) 241-4510

## Support Group Empowering

In 1995, the Social Services Department added a new program to assist individuals in coping with vision loss. Our support group is a 10-week structured program in which participants may share their thoughts and feelings relating to their vision loss. The groups are co-facilitated by Jill Hunt, Social Services Coordinator and Dawn Christensen, ADA Consultant.

The Sight Center has recently completed a group which consisted of 9 individuals with macular degeneration at Swan Creek Retirement village. We have all found the support group to be filled with laughter and tears, but most of all empowering.

For further information, please contact Jill Hunt or Dawn Christensen at (419) 241-1183.

*The Social Services Department offers a variety of programs, including home visits, referrals, orientation and mobility training, agency information and talks and tours.*